



## Community Forest Resource

**For Prelims:** Community Forest Resource, Reserve Forest, Protected Forest, Sanctuary and National Parks

**For Mains:** Forest Rights Act and related issue, Community Forest Resource Rights and significance of the Recognition, Issues Related to SCs & STs, Management of Social Sector/Services

### Why in News?

**Chhattisgarh** has become only the second state in the country to **recognise Community Forest Resource (CFR) rights** of a village inside a **Kanger Ghati National Park**.

- While CFR rights are an important empowerment tool, getting a consensus amongst various villages about their traditional boundaries often proves a challenge.
- In 2016, the **Odisha government was the first to recognise Community Forest Resources (CFRs)** inside the [Simlipal National Park](#).

### What are the Highlights about the Kanger Ghati National Park?

- Kanger Valley National Park is located in the Bastar district (Near Jagdalpur) of the state of Chhattisgarh.
- The Kanger Valley National park is also known as **Kanger Ghati National Park**.
- It was declared as a **National park in the year of 1982**. Total area of the park is about 200 Km<sup>2</sup>.
- The national Park is situated on the valley of river Kanger. The park derives its name from the Kanger River, which flows throughout its length.
- The Park is a typical mixed **humid deciduous type of forest**, in which the Sal, Saugaun, teak and bamboo trees are available in abundance.
- The **most popular species in this area is Bastar Maina** which enchant everyone with their human voice.

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## National Parks & Sanctuaries of Chhattisgarh



## What is Community Forest Resource (CFR)?

### ▪ About:

- It is the **common forest land** that has been traditionally protected and conserved for sustainable use by a particular community.
- The community **uses it to access resources available within the traditional and customary boundary** of the village; and for seasonal use of landscape in case of pastoralist communities.
- Each CFR area has a **customary boundary with identifiable landmarks** recognised by the community and its neighboring villages.

### ▪ Categories:

- It may **include forest of any category** – revenue forest, classified & unclassified forest, deemed forest, District Level Committee (DLC) land, reserve forest, [protected forest](#), **sanctuary and national parks etc.**

## What are Community Forest Resource Rights?

- Under Section 3(1)(i) of the [Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers \(Recognition of Forest Rights\) Act \(commonly referred to as the Forest Rights Act or the FRA\)](#), 2006 the Community Forest Resource rights **provide for recognition of the right to “protect, regenerate or conserve or manage”** the community forest resource.
- These **rights allow the community to formulate rules for forest use** by itself and others and thereby discharge its responsibilities under Section 5 of the FRA.
- CFR rights, along with Community Rights (CRs) under Sections 3(1)(b) and 3(1)(c), which **include nistar rights** (used erstwhile in princely states or zamindari, etc.) **and rights over non-timber**

**forest products**, ensure sustainable livelihoods of the community.

- These rights give the **authority to the [Gram Sabha](#) to adopt local traditional practices** of forest conservation and management within the community forest resource boundary.

## What are the Benefits of CFR Rights Recognition?

- **Giving Justice to Forest Communities:**
  - Aimed at **undoing the “historic injustice” meted out to forest-dependent communities** due to curtailment of their customary rights over forests.
  - It is important as it **recognises the community’s right to use, manage and conserve forest resources**, and to legally hold forest land that these communities have used for cultivation and residence.
- **Underlines Role of Forest Dwellers:**
  - It also **underlines the integral role that forest dwellers play in sustainability of forests** and in conservation of biodiversity.
  - It is of **greater significance inside protected forests like national parks, sanctuaries and [tiger reserves](#)** as traditional dwellers then become a part of management of the protected forests using their traditional wisdom.

## What is the Forest Rights Act?

- **FRA enacted in 2006 recognises the rights of forest-dwelling tribal communities** and other traditional forest dwellers to forest resources on which these communities were dependent for a variety of needs, including livelihood, habitation and other sociocultural needs.
- It recognizes and vest the forest rights and occupation in **Forest land in Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD)** who have been residing in such forests for generations.
- It **strengthens the conservation regime of the forests** while ensuring livelihood and food security of the FDST and OTFD.
- The **[Gram Sabha](#)** is the authority to initiate the process for determining the nature and extent of **Individual Forest Rights (IFR) or Community Forest Rights (CFR)** or both that may be given to FDST and OTFD.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question

### Q. Consider the following statements: (2018)

1. The definition of “Critical Wildlife Habitat” is incorporated in the Forest Rights Act, 2006.
2. For the first time in India, Baigas have been given Habitat Rights.
3. Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change officially decides and declares Habitat Rights for Primitive and Vulnerable Tribal Groups in any part of India.

### Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

**Ans: (a)**

**Exp:**

- **“Critical Wildlife Habitat” has been defined in the Forest Rights Act, 2006** as such areas

of National Parks and Sanctuaries that are required to be kept as inviolate for the purpose of wildlife conservation as may be determined and notified by the Central Government. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- The Baiga community (largely in Madhya Pradesh) is one of the 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India, who are eligible to get Habitat Rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006. Over the years, increasing state control over forests and diversion of forest land for development and conservation has seriously threatened these forest communities. The Government of Madhya Pradesh in **2015 recognised the habitat rights of Baigas** and the tribe became the first community in India to get the habitat rights. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- The **Habitat Rights of the PVTGs are recognized by the District Level Committee in the States**. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs clarifies the scope and extent of the definition of habitat rights in the context of PVTGs. Hence, statement 3 is not correct. Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.

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